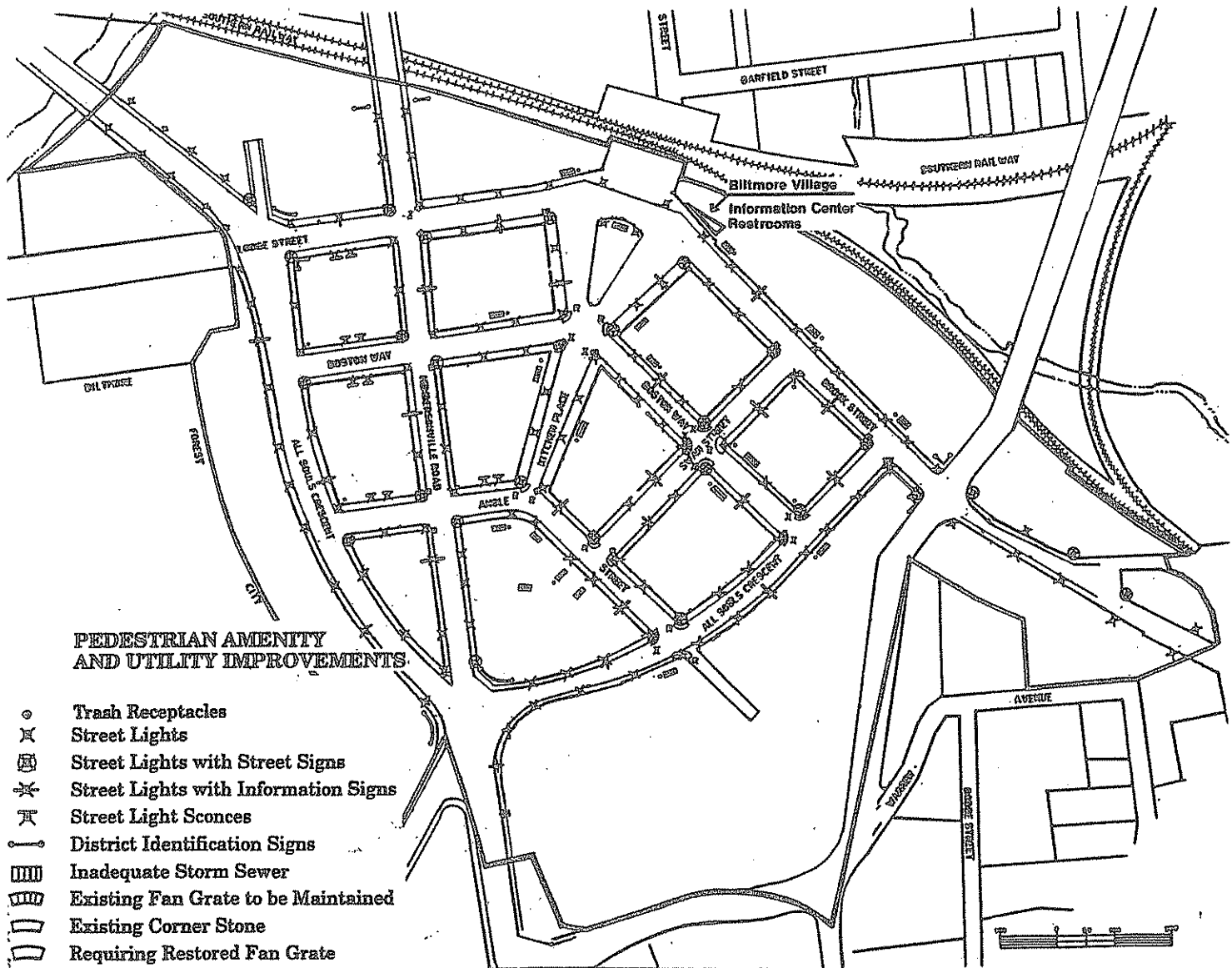

CHAPTER 6: THE PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

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THE PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT 1900

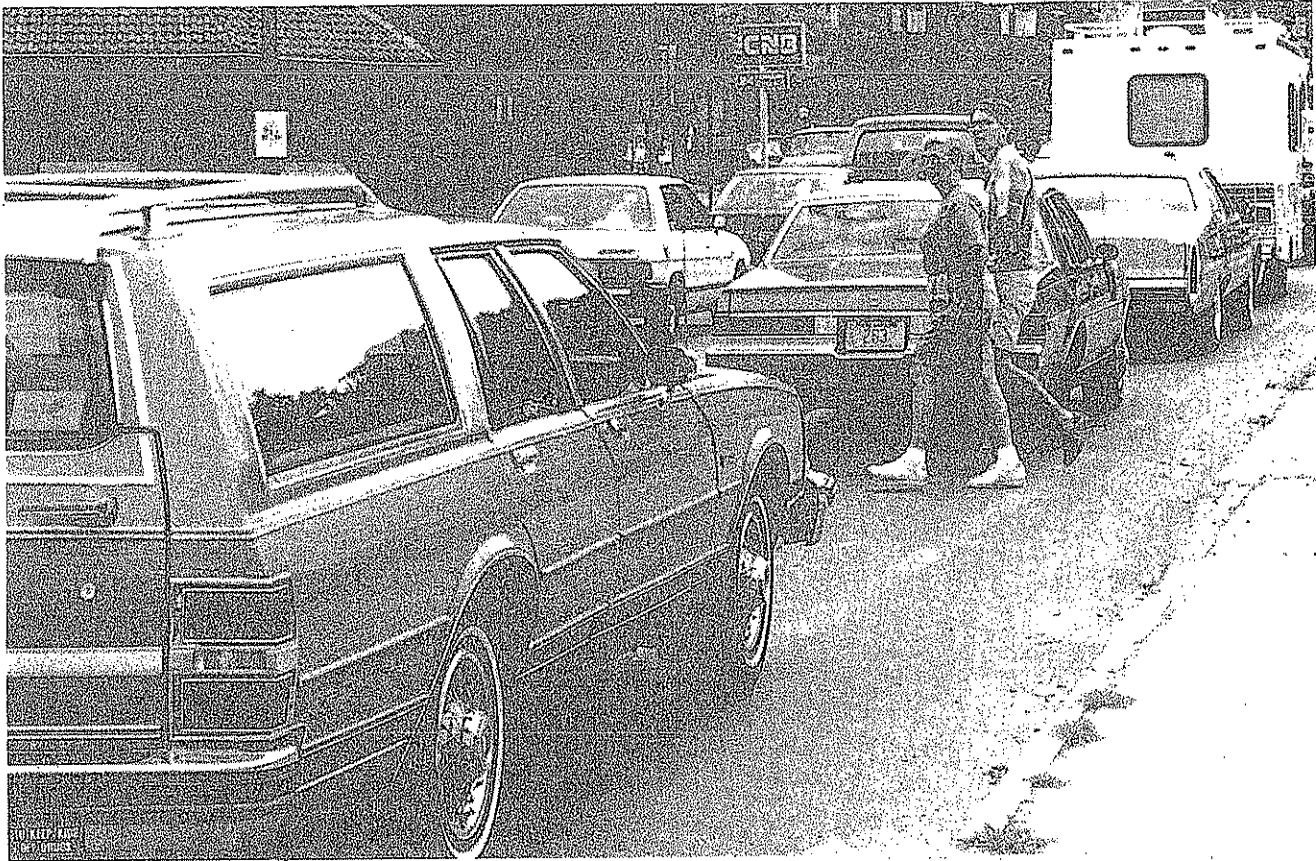


All Souls Crescent, 1905

Whether he was designing Central Park in New York, the gardens to a private estate, or a planned community; Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. always designed with the pedestrian in mind. So was the case in Biltmore Village. He designed streets in an interesting fanshape pattern focusing on the All Souls Church. These streets became unique pedestrian experiences with the addition of grand arcades of trees, richly textured walks, beautifully designed street lights, contextual signage, and human scale buildings.

Of course when Olmsted designed the layout of Biltmore Village it was designed as a picturesque “millionaires village”. The train was still the preferred method of travel, Biltmore Estate® was a private residence, and George Vanderbilt wanted to create something special outside his gates for the benefit of the public. Shopkeepers, artisans, and residents were encouraged to participate in the Vanderbilt experience. A relaxed, idyllic, European village was born in the remote mountains of Western Carolina.

THE PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT 1990

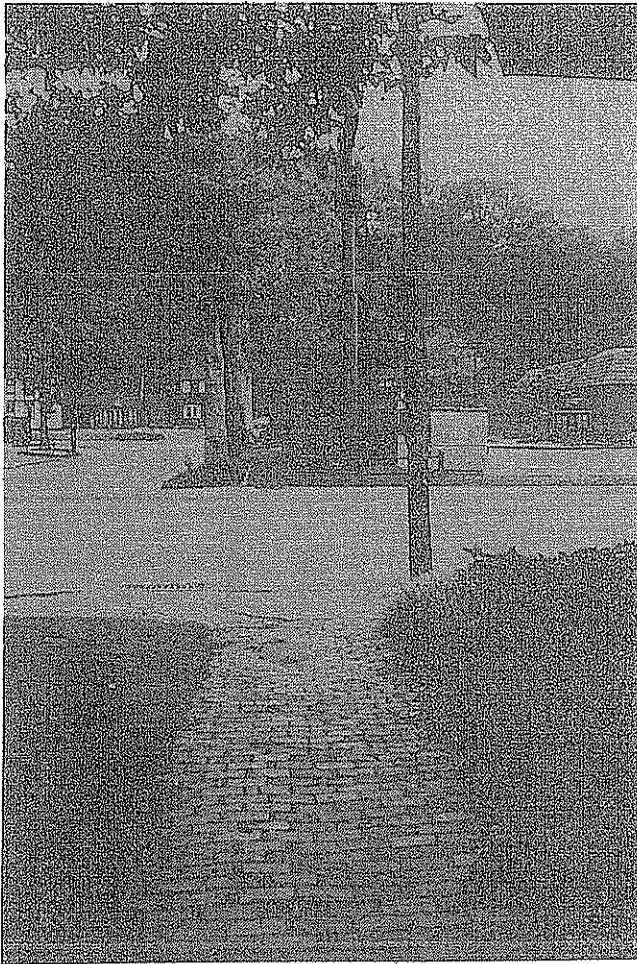


Visitors to Biltmore face danger crossing busy streets

Many things have changed today; the Biltmore Estate attracts over 700,000 visitors per year and the automobile has taken over the pedestrian territory. The utilization of Biltmore Village finds the pedestrian and the automobile in conflict. Drive-in windows, gas stations, widened streets and intrusive signage have obscured or damaged the integrity of the Village.

The automobile, not the pedestrian, is dominant in the very heart of America's only planned European village. What was once a pleasant experience for the pedestrian has become an obstacle course. Biltmore Village, the shining example of a unique collaboration between the founder of the American Institute of Architects and the American Institute of Landscape Architects, is in danger of becoming just another suburban retail center.

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS



Reclaim pedestrian right-of-ways

The original pedestrian-oriented design of Biltmore Village gives the entrance to Biltmore Estate® its context. The appearance of the Village should be a logical transition to the visitor when entering the entrance to the Estate, not a surprise. The preservation of the European pedestrian concept of the Village is of vital importance to the genuineness of the Biltmore experience.

Cultural tourism must have its basis in history in order to avoid the pitfall of temporary attractions.

The Biltmore Village Steering Committee recognized the following problems and offers solutions which target improvements to the pedestrian environment.

SIDEWALKS

PROBLEM:

Private developers have been allowed to encroach upon public right-of-way at the following locations:

- Brook Street between the Depot and Lula Street
- All Souls Crescent between Hendersonville Road and Boston Way
- Angle Street between Hendersonville Road and All Souls Crescent

SOLUTION:

- Where pedestrian walkways do not exist or are in irreparable condition, introduce crushed brick paths as a temporary pedestrian facility.

PROBLEM:

Original sidewalks have suffered due to natural deterioration, flooding and pedestrian traffic.

SOLUTION:

- Existing brick sidewalks should be removed, compacted, and reset to ensure future stability.

PROBLEM:

Inappropriate concrete sidewalks have deteriorated and need replacing.

SOLUTION:

- In conjunction with the *Biltmore Village Guidelines*, replace all existing concrete sidewalks and curbs with brick sidewalks and granite curbs as per the original 1917 Biltmore Village Plan.

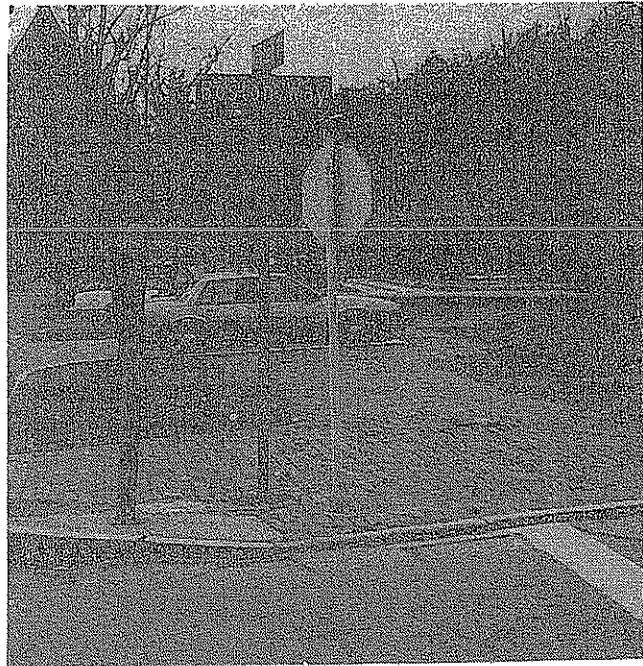
CURB CUTS

PROBLEM:

Inconsistent and numerous curb cuts fragment the visual experience of the pedestrian from the sidewalk.

SOLUTION:

- Incorporate brick driveways into new project planning.
- As per the original Olmsted Plan, reintroduce keystone type corners as a transitional base between public granite curbs and private drive concrete curbs.
- Reduce quantity of curb cuts.
- Avoid offsetting sidewalks to accommodate parking.
- Based on recommendations for off-street parking (both surface and multi-level) remove unnecessary curb cuts and place a moratorium on new curb cuts.



Avoid interrupting the pedestrian experience

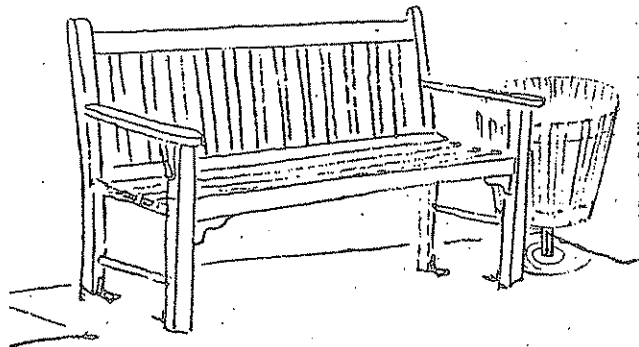
STREET FURNITURE

PROBLEM:

Existing pedestrian benches are inadequate and existing public trash receptacles do not contribute to the style of the historic district.

SOLUTION:

- Reintroduce street furniture including benches and trash receptacles based on traditional English garden design.



Provide appropriate street furniture

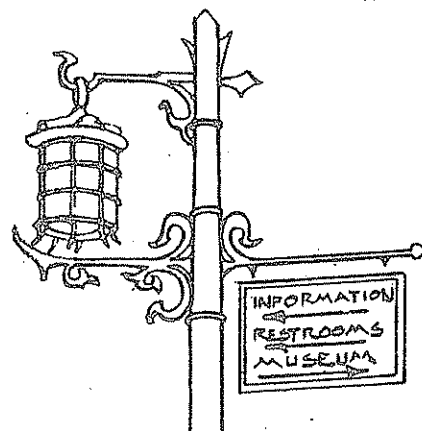
PUBLIC FACILITIES

PROBLEM:

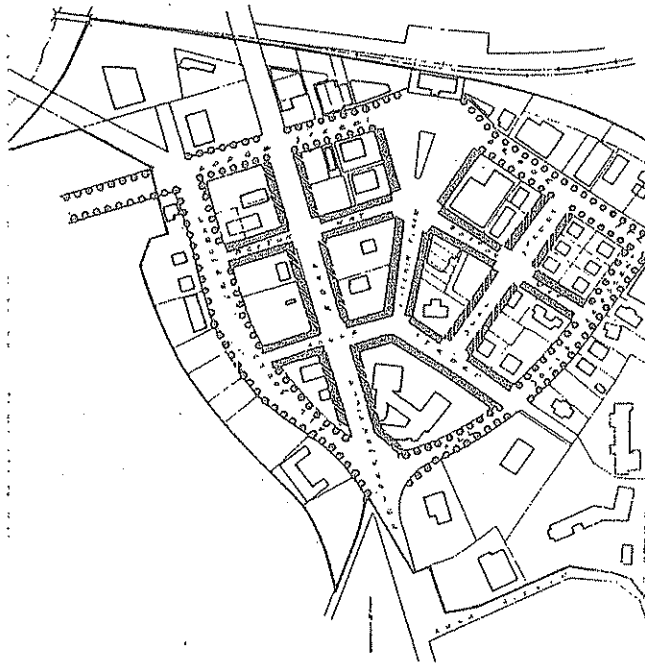
As visitors to Biltmore Village increase in number, individual businesses cannot accommodate public needs.

SOLUTION:

- Public facilities should be developed and identified including; public restrooms, information center, and local museum.
- In conjunction with Biltmore Village Merchants Associations' efforts, provide unified directional and informational signage throughout the Village pointing out key architectural features, parking facilities and services, etc.

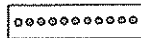


Provide visitor information

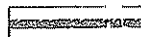
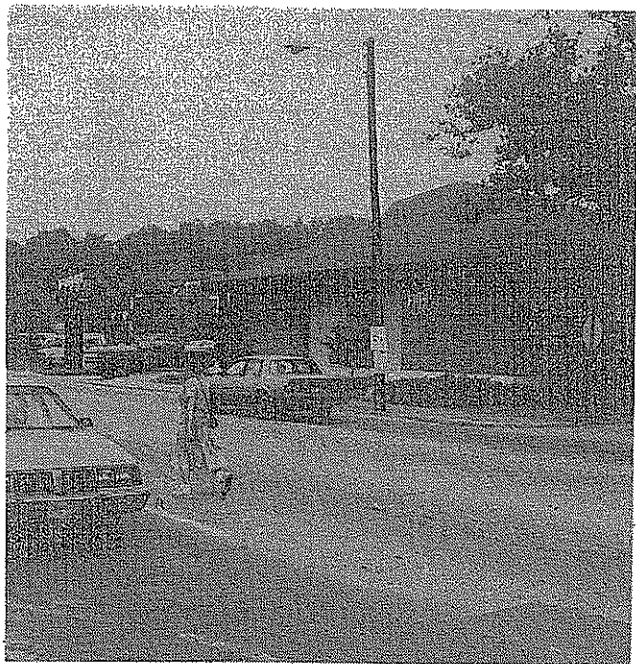


Biltmore Village

TULIP POPLAR

LONDON PLANES
(SYCAMORE)

LINDEN

*Street planting plan**Orient streets to the pedestrian*

LANDSCAPING

PROBLEM:

The loss of original trees and the re-planting of inappropriate shrubs has divided the Village visually. Original plaza space has been compromised by the inappropriate planting of trees in the center.

SOLUTION:

- Replant arcades of trees along Village streets.
- Implement planting of entire streets simultaneously to ensure consistent growth.
- Enlarge the green Biltmore Plaza, reduce width of one way streets on either side, provide new street trees at the perimeter.

PARKING

PROBLEM:

Extensive surface parking lots in the Village have fragmented the quality of the pedestrian experience.

SOLUTION:

- Surface parking should be screened architecturally where possible. However, where surface transitional parking facilities are necessary, screen with fences and landscaping as per the Biltmore Village guidelines.
- Parking facilities should be located to the rear of all structures. New and infill construction should maintain site locations and setbacks relative to land use recommendations in Chapter 4. Main entrances should be oriented towards the sidewalk, not along parking facilities.

DRIVE-IN WINDOWS

PROBLEM:

Drive-in windows are not pedestrian oriented. Their introduction into the Village is contradictory to quality pedestrian life.

SOLUTION:

- Ban further drive-in windows in Biltmore Village and relocate existing ones to the new Lula Street by-pass where possible.

UTILITIES

PROBLEM:

Overhead utility lines are inconsistent with the concept of underground power lines as originally installed by Vanderbilt.

SOLUTION:

- Wherever possible, public utilities should be placed underground. Where this is not feasible, consolidate utility lines to allow for original scale trees.

LIGHTING

PROBLEM:

At present, State and municipal street lighting consists of unsightly cobra-head type fixtures on wooden poles with power supplied by overhead lines.

SOLUTION:

- Replacing existing lighting with historic street lights and underground wiring.

HIGHWAYS

PROBLEM:

The expansion of thoroughfares in the Village are destroying the pedestrian experience.

SOLUTION:

- By creating the Lula Street bypass, recapture original pavement and right-of-way properties along Brook Street, between Lula Street and Biltmore Avenue.

MAINTENANCE

PROBLEM:

Streets and sidewalks are not being properly maintained.

SOLUTION:

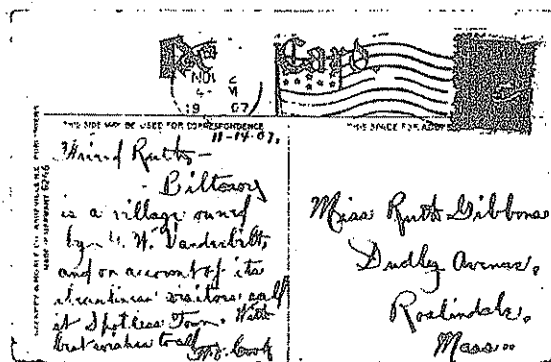
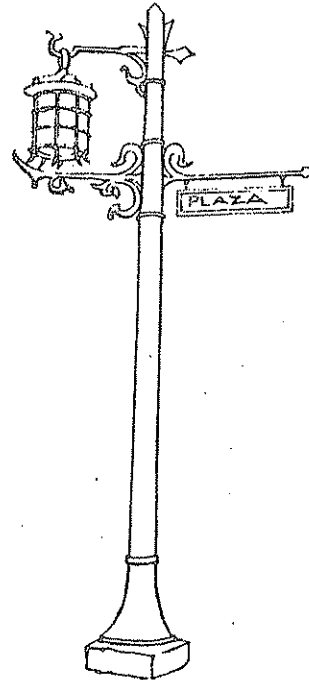
- Improve maintenance of streets and sidewalks in Biltmore Village.

PROBLEM:

Vacant private lots are not properly maintained creating a safety hazard.

SOLUTION:

- Maintain vacant lots properly and encourage development of new infill building on vacant lots.



Description of 1907 landscape maintenance